

Clean Seeds and Fewer Weeds

By E. E. PATTISON, Director

International Seed Testing Laboratories, No. 11 Park Place, New York City
Formerly Seed Analyst U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

Editor's Note:

Considering the original cost of grass seed, the expense involved in seeding a golf course, and the possibility of infesting turf with obnoxious weeds, quality in seed sown is of tremendous importance. Mrs. Pattison is one of the outstanding authorities on seed analysis in the United States.

THIS series of articles is not intended to be technical. Its purpose is to present for practical use such information as will be of help to those interested in the great industry of golf.

A large amount of this information was obtained during a period of twenty years working in and in contact with the Seed Testing Laboratory of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. For this reason the writer wishes the reader to know something about this branch of the federal service which has been the principal factor in obtaining better seeds, not only for the farmer but for the golf course.

This laboratory has grown under the direction of Mr. E. Brown, Botanist in charge, from a small division to a very important division of the Bureau of Plant Industry. Besides the "mother" laboratory in Washington, D. C. there are branch laboratories under direction of federal analysts at several of the State Experiment Stations in the middle and far west.

Only a part of the work of the Seed Testing Laboratory is the testing of seed for purity and germination.

Beside the corps of analysts who take care of the analytical work there is a staff of scientists who give their undivided attention to many research problems.

Federal and State Seed Laws

When this branch of the service was established there were no state or federal seed laws in existence. Now almost every state has its own law regulating the sale of seed and there is also the Federal Import Act regulating the importation of grass seeds used by golf courses. It is hoped by those vitally interested in these seeds that some amendment to the Act will be passed in the immediate future which will prevent the importation of low grade parcels, such as Chewings fescue which has lost its vitality either through disease, transportation through tropical waters, or from improper harvesting, curing or storage.

Federal Laboratory Secret Service

The laboratory also has charge of the Adulterated Seed Investigation which is in the nature of pure detective work. Every year the government, through outside secret agents, obtains samples and buys merchan-

dise which is tested and the result, together with the name of the dealer, is published if adulteration is found.

Even with seed laws, state inspection, federal regulation of imports, adulterated investigation, poor seed is sold, and usually sold by misrepresentation. So buying seed is still a case of "Buyer Beware."

Buy Seed Early and Have Tested

The Federal Laboratory will test without charge a certain number of samples per month for purity and germination. The service, due to the large amount of samples received from many sources, is not rapid enough, so those interested in seeds usually have their samples tested at some outside laboratory and use the government laboratory only in case of dispute and differences.

Every golf club that wishes to protect itself should buy its seed early enough to have the deliveries tested before planting. Even though the merchandise comes from a reliable source, tagged with full analysis, deliveries should be tested before planting.

(To be continued)

Note: The next article will be devoted to the Species Agrostis in which is found that very interesting group of Bents.

Creeping Bent in Tennessee

A Letter from C. E. DAVIS, Professional

Shelby Park Golf Club, Nashville, Tennessee

I started a nursery two years ago with five different strains of bent. I found some of them no good for this climate but managed to get two good strains. I have four new greens planted and they are doing fine. They were planted in September. I used plenty of topdressing, plenty of water and sulfate of ammonia, and used the clippings to plant bare spots, with a light topdressing.

I planted fourteen hundred feet in my nursery this year of the two good strains, watered and kept the weeds out.

I had some experience with bent while in Pekin, Illinois. We were successful with it there, and I honestly believe some of the bents will grow in the South if one finds the right strain. I believe I have found one, and will be glad to send in a report on my greens during the summer. There are a number of greenkeepers and pros who are trying bent down south. Someone is going to put it over.

I am a strong believer in THE NATIONAL GREENKEEPER and enjoy reading it every month.